LISTING OF CLAIMS

1. (currently amended) A pneumatic tire comprising a tread portion provided with circumferential grooves, main oblique grooves and auxiliary oblique grooves,

the circumferential grooves including a pair of axially outer grooves disposed one on each side of the tire equator and at least one axially inner groove between the axially outer grooves, so as to divide the tread portion into at least four circumferential regions including a pair of axially inner regions between the axially outer grooves and said at least one axially inner groove and a pair of axially outer regions axially outside the axially outer grooves,

the main oblique grooves each extending across one of the axially inner regions so that the axially outer end is connected with the adjacent axially outer circumferential groove and the axially inner end is connected with the adjacent axially inner groove,

the auxiliary oblique grooves arranged alternately with the main oblique grooves in the circumferential direction of the tire, and

each said auxiliary oblique groove extending axially inwardly from the adjacent axially outer circumferential groove, while inclining towards the same circumferential direction as the main oblique grooves, to one of the axially adjacent main oblique grooves, ~~without branching off~~ whereby the auxiliary oblique groove is connected to said adjacent axially outer circumferential groove and said one of the axially adjacent main oblique grooves only,

each said auxiliary oblique groove comprising a narrow middle portion having a groove width of more than 0.5 mm and not more than 3.0 mm and a wide end portion connecting to said one of the axially adjacent main oblique grooves while gradually increasing the width ~~thereof~~ of the wide end portion from the narrow middle portion,

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the axially inner regions each having an axial width L1 of from 0.15 to 0.25 times the

critical tread width Tw1, and the main oblique grooves each having an inclination

angle $\theta 1$ of from 45 to 90 degrees at the axially outer end thereof, and an inclination

angle $\theta 2$ at the axially inner end thereof which is less than the inclination angle $\theta 1$,

when measured with respect to the tire circumferential direction.

2. (previously presented) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, wherein the narrow middle portion is substantially parallel with the adjacent main oblique grooves.

3. (original) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the connecting point at the inner end of each said auxiliary oblique groove with the main oblique groove is axially outwardly spaced apart from the axially inner circumferential groove by a distance of from 20 to 70% of the axial width L1 of the axially inner region.

4. (previously presented) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, wherein each said main oblique groove is provided in an axially inner end portion thereof with a shallow part which is shallower than the outer end thereof, and the length of the shallow part is in a range of from 15 to 30% of the length of the main oblique groove.

5. (previously presented) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, wherein

the axially outer regions are each provided with oblique shoulder grooves and auxiliary

shoulder grooves which are alternately arranged in the tire circumferential direction,

said oblique shoulder grooves extend axially outwardly from one of the axially outer

circumferential grooves, while aligning their axially inner ends with the axially outer

ends of the main oblique grooves, to or beyond the axial position of a critical tread

edge (e1), and

said auxiliary shoulder grooves extend axially outwardly from said one of the axially

outer circumferential grooves, while aligning their axially inner ends with the axially

outer ends of the auxiliary oblique grooves, to an axial position before said critical

tread edge (e1).

6. (previously presented) The pneumatic tire according to claim 5, wherein the auxiliary shoulder grooves are inclined to the same direction as the oblique shoulder grooves.

7. (canceled)

8. (original) The pneumatic tire according to claim 5, wherein

the tread portion is provided with an unidirectional tread pattern, and

the main oblique grooves have heel-side edges chamfered and toe-side edges not

chamfered.

9. (previously presented) The pneumatic tire according to claim 5, wherein

the tread portion is provided with an unidirectional tread pattern,

and the oblique shoulder grooves have heel-side edges chamfered and toe-side edges not

chamfered.

10. (previously presented) The pneumatic tire according to claim 5, wherein

the tread portion is provided with an unidirectional tread pattern,

and the auxiliary shoulder grooves have heel-side edges chamfered and toe-side edges not

chamfered.

11. (previously presented) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, wherein the circumferential

grooves have axially inner chamfered edges and axially outer edges not chamfered.

12. (previously presented) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, wherein each said main

oblique groove has a width (GW3, GW3o, GW3i) of not less than 10 % but not more than 70 %

of the width of the axially inner circumferential groove, wherein the width GW3o at the outer

end is more than the width GW3i at the inner end thereof.

13. (previously presented) The pneumatic tire according to claim 1, wherein each said main

oblique groove has a width (GW3, GW3o, GW3i) of not less than 10 % but not more than 70 %

of the width of the axially inner circumferential groove, wherein the width GW3o at the outer

end is in a range of from 1.2 to 1.8 times the width GW3i at the inner end.

14-15. (canceled)

16. (previously presented) A pneumatic tire comprising a tread portion provided with

circumferential grooves, main oblique grooves and auxiliary oblique grooves,

the circumferential grooves including a pair of axially outer grooves disposed one on

each side of the tire equator and at least one axially inner groove between the axially

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outer grooves, so as to divide the tread portion into at least four circumferential

regions including a pair of axially inner regions between the axially outer grooves and

said at least one axially inner groove and a pair of axially outer regions axially

outside the axially outer grooves,

the main oblique grooves each extending across one of the axially inner regions so that

the axially outer end is connected with the adjacent axially outer circumferential

groove and the axially inner end is connected with the adjacent axially inner groove,

the auxiliary oblique grooves arranged alternately with the main oblique grooves in the

circumferential direction of the tire, and each extending from the adjacent axially

outer circumferential groove to one of the axially adjacent main oblique grooves,

the axially inner regions each having an axial width L1 of from 0.15 to 0.25 times the

critical tread width TW1, and the main oblique grooves each having an inclination

angle θ 1 of from 45 to 90 degrees at the axially outer end thereof, and an inclination

angle θ 2 at the axially inner end thereof which is less than the inclination angle θ 1,

when measured with respect to the tire circumferential direction, wherein

the axially outer regions are each provided with oblique shoulder grooves and auxiliary

shoulder grooves which are alternately arranged in the tire circumferential direction,

said oblique shoulder grooves extend axially outwardly from one of the axially outer

circumferential grooves, while aligning their axially inner ends with the axially outer

ends of the main oblique grooves, to or beyond the axial position of a critical tread

edge (e1), and

said auxiliary shoulder grooves extend axially outwardly from said one of the axially

outer circumferential grooves, while aligning their axially inner ends with the axially

outer ends of the auxiliary oblique grooves, to an axial position before said critical

tread edge (e1), wherein

the auxiliary shoulder grooves are inclined oppositely to the oblique shoulder grooves.